



Mid Wales Matters



The Newsletter of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists

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Chairman's Comment

Recently one of my constituents phoned at 3 o'clock in the morning to tell me that his garden wall had just been flattened by a 17 year old motorist who had passed his test 2 weeks previously. I shall limit myself here to a few words about the youngster involved – the ones I have already delivered to the early morning caller would be inappropriate in a respected publication such as this!

The stretch of road where the accident took place was well lit. There was quite a sharp bend and it had rained heavily – two facts which the driver, in a more perfect world, would have taken into account. A 30mph limit, which he almost certainly ignored, was also in force.

The statistics about young male drivers are well known, and the incident I've described brought them home to me. Perhaps the new speeding fines will have some effect, but I think far more post-test training is needed for inexperienced young drivers.

Frank Torrens.

Editor's Spot

Another AGM, another year older! As you know Powys County Council priced us out of their premises which we used in previous years. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise because it meant that we met in the more intimate surroundings of the Bracken Trust - those attending actually sat together rather than sparsely scattered around a vast conference room. In addition we didn't just get tea and biscuits at the end but a really splendid selection of sandwiches, snacks and cakes prepared by our chairman's wife, Marian. In all, a tremendous improvement!

The poor old AGM is never much of a crowd puller. It's a constitutional necessity for every club and society in the land - especially important for those with charity status - but unless some burning issue is to be discussed the proceedings follow a routine pattern and so a full house can't really be expected.

I've attended some incredibly tedious ones in my time, and some good ones too. What makes a good AGM? It needs to be efficiently run, to take place in a friendly atmosphere and to encourage participation from the floor. Ours scored three ticks and rates highly on my list. In addition, people actually volunteered to come on the committee and the whole event took less than an hour.

And then, of course, there were those refreshments.....

Annual General Meeting 2008

The 4th Annual General Meeting of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists was held on Saturday 8th March 2008 at The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells. This was attended by 20 group members and apologies were received from 14 members, 3 associates and 3 IAM personnel.

Our chairman Francis Torrens addressed the meeting and outlined the achievements of the last year and the challenges for the future. The Secretary Geoff Smith reported on the success of our associates and observers. He also commended the group newsletter, Mid Wales Matters and the web site to members. The audited group accounts for 2007 prepared by Mandy Giordano were approved and elections were held for our officers, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer together with those for new committee members.

Those officers appointed to serve for 2008 are:

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Chairman: | Francis Torrens |
| Vice Chairman: | Peter Gilbert |
| Secretary: | Geoff Smith |
| Treasurer: | Mandy Giordano |

Committee members re-elected for a 3-year term: Pat Allen, Sean Miles & Berwyn Woolnough

Committee members appointed for a 3-year term: Mike Smith, Ron Collins & Nigel Godman

Committee member retiring after a 3-year term: Martin Backhouse

Martin was a founder committee member and has served on our committee for four years. We thank Martin sincerely for his valuable contribution in this role and for his continued support as a car observer with our group.

For the first time we now have a full complement of committee members.

Motoring Milestones

On August 17th, 1896, poor Bridget Driscoll, a pedestrian, was the first person to be killed in a road crash.

Hit near Crystal Palace by a car apparently travelling at just 4mph, she was the subject of an inquest at which the coroner hoped that "such a thing would never happen again". Today more than a million people die every year on roads across the world.

Before June, 1935, you could jump into a car on your 17th birthday and hit the road. The first successful test candidate was a Mr J. Beane. The test lasted 30 minutes and included an emergency stop, a three point turn and reversing round a corner. Today there are 4 possible manoeuvres, a separate theory test, a computer-simulated hazard perception test and fuel-saving "eco-driving" techniques.

Are we making progress?

It looks as though motorists are fast learners! Speeding fines have more than halved in the UK over the past year. The figures come from major hire firm National Car Rental.

The company says its customers normally clock up thousands of penalties every quarter, but the number of tickets it has received dropped by 52 per cent over the last 12 months.

And it's not only speed cameras that motorists are dodging. Our table shows that National has also recorded a 48 per cent decrease in the number of bus lane penalties issued to its customers between the third and fourth quarter of 2007.

There were significant drops in parking, congestion charge and other general traffic offences – such as talking on a mobile phone at the wheel – during that period, too.

National bosses claim the shift is down to new legislation which could land reckless business drivers in trouble with their employers. Operations manager David Alexander explained: "When you speed in a rental vehicle, the police inform the hire company via the DVLA, and it will then tell your boss. So your job could possibly be at risk."

Recruitment - Mobile Display Unit

The group has decided to use the IAM Mobile Display Unit at two events later this year. The purpose is to raise the profile of the group and to recruit new associates. We are planning to attend the following events.

Newtown Motor Show on Sunday 29th June 2008 held in the grounds of the Park Offices.

Llandrindod Wells Victoria Festival Historic Vehicle Display on Saturday 23rd August 08 held on the Common near the Lake

Both events will run from 10 am to 5 pm and we need volunteers to staff the unit during these periods. Our experience suggests that three people operating in two hour shift are required. Allowing for setup from 9am we have four periods and will therefore need a minimum of 12 persons for each event. This is a good opportunity for our members to support the group by talking others who share their enthusiasm for driving and riding. We need both motorcyclist and drivers and you will be provided with an IAM shirt for your efforts. If you want to discuss participating please contact Geoff Smith and if you can help please let him know what event(s) you can attend and your preferred time period(s).

Your group needs you so volunteers please!

New Members' Presentation

Jerad Gilbert was the last person to receive his certificate and is pictured below being congratulated by Francis Torrens, Group Chairman, at the new associates introduction meeting held at the Bracken Trust on 26 March 08. As reported in the last newsletter Jerad is our youngest member.



New Members

Congratulations and a warm welcome to the following associates who were successful in their IAM Advanced Driving 🚗 or Riding Test 🏍️

| Name | Location | Observer | Date |
|-----------------|------------|-------------|----------|
| Ken Lampitt 🚗 | Kington | Ron Collins | Mar 08 |
| Michael Lloyd 🚗 | Llanidloes | Vic Orehawa | April 08 |

Associate Course Dates

🚗 Denotes Car Course

🏍️ Denotes Motorcycle Course

| Course | Start Date | Day | Times | Location |
|----------|------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 🚗08/3 🏍️ | 28/05/2008 | Wednesday | 7:00 PM 9:30 PM | The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells |
| 🚗08/4 🏍️ | 30/07/2008 | Wednesday | 7:00 PM 9:30 PM | The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells |
| 🚗08/5 | 01/10/2008 | Wednesday | 7:00 PM 9:30 PM | The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells |

Observer Training Dates

| Date | Day | Times | Location |
|------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 12/05/2008 | Monday | 7:00 PM 9:00 PM | Builth Wells, Co-operative Car Park |
| 10/06/2008 | Tuesday | 7:00 PM 9:00 PM | Crossgates, Knill's Car Park |
| 09/07/2008 | Wednesday | 7:00 PM 9:00 PM | Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells |
| 07/08/2008 | Thursday | 7:00 PM 9:00 PM | Newtown, Morrisons Car Park |
| 07/09/2008 | Sunday | 10:00 AM 12:00 PM | Builth Wells, Co-operative Car Park |
| 04/10/2008 | Saturday | 10:00 AM 12:00 PM | Crossgates, Knill's Car Park |
| 02/11/2008 | Sunday | 10:00 AM 12:00 PM | Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells |
| 06/12/2008 | Saturday | 2:00 PM 4:00 PM | Newtown, Morrisons Car Park |

Please note that all the above-published dates and venues may be subject to change due to circumstances beyond the committee's control. For the latest information, visit our web site: mwam.powys.org.uk or contact the group secretary.

Please contact our Chief Observer Ron Collins (01597 823417) if you require any further details.

Your Committee

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|--|---|--|
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Mid Wales Advanced Motorists (MWAM) publish this Newsletter to provide a means of communication within the group to Members and Associates. The opinions are those of the Editor and individual contributors and do not necessarily represent the view of MWAM or the Institute of Advanced Motorists to which it is affiliated.